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is interpreted in terms of the West and the South, rather than in those of New England and the Atlantic seaboard. The course of international relations and the development of American foreign policy are, in general, only briefly discussed. The volumes by Professor Becker and Professor Dodd strike out new lines, and may fairly be regarded as substantive contributions. The series as a whole is a distinct enrichment of the resources of the college teacher, and ought to find a useful place in school and public libraries.

WILLIAM MACDONALD.

*The Review of American Colonial Legislation by the King in Council.* By ELMER BEECHER RUSSELL, Ph.D. [Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, edited by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, vol. LXIV., no. 2.] (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1915. Pp. 227.)

DR. RUSSELL'S intensive monograph and Professor Andrews's brief article on "The Royal Disallowance" (reprint, American Antiquarian Society, *Proceedings*, October, 1914) are noteworthy additions to the literature of colonial history. Their value lies not alone in bringing to light an unfamiliar subject, but chiefly in revealing the significance and importance of a power and a point of view once commonly neglected. Over four hundred and fifty colonial enactments of nine continental colonies were disallowed by the exercise of the royal prerogative. It is remarkable that this vigorous check upon colonial self-direction, counted a serious matter by the colonists themselves, has been viewed by past writers as a subject to be ignored. Professor Andrews discusses the subject in general, while Dr. Russell's study is more ambitious, analyzing the matter in a wealth of detail, well organized and well documented. Both writers from deliberate choice approach the subject from only one angle, that of the British authorities. The disallowing power was fully justified in point of law and necessity and it was used consistently to maintain the law and custom of the British constitution and the interests and welfare of the British empire. The home authorities in general did not act in an arbitrary manner in reviewing colonial laws, frequently showing an attitude of forbearance, and in many instances the check was wholesome for the colonies, saving them from the difficulties of ill-advised and harmful legislation.

The efficiency of the royal check was often weakened by the difficulties of distance and communication and by the delay, indifference, and ignorance of officials. Its influence and effectiveness are questions which cannot be determined by simply assuming the central-office point of view. The whole history of the colonies is replete with evasions and disobedience of British control and it would be folly to draw any conclusions as to the success of the royal disallowance until the matter has

also been fully studied and analyzed from the colonial viewpoint and sources. This task still waits to be done. Both writers realize this fact, but Dr. Russell is not careful to avoid the temptations of generalizing upon its effectiveness. His statement that the government "did achieve the main objects of its desire" cannot be supported by a partial investigation (p. 204).

There are certain errors in Dr. Russell's work which should be corrected. Tousley for Tousey (p. 106), 1703 for 1704 (p. 137), V 16 for V 19 (p. 103, note 2), and *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, for *Am. Hist. Assn., Reports* (pp. 105, note 1, 106, note 1) are accidental in a detailed study commendably free from misstatements of pure data. The one event of reports to the House of Lords in 1702, 1703, 1704, hardly warrants the statement that "For several years it [the Board of Trade] rendered annual reports to the house of Commons" (p. 58). The dates cited when Connecticut transmitted her laws to England (p. 103, note 1) are completely at variance with those given accurately by Professor Andrews in his recent paper on "Connecticut and the British Government" (reprint, *Acorn Club Publication*, 1915). This is evidence of rather hasty research. Dr. Russell refers to only one of Fane's nine reports on the Connecticut laws, which, though not acted upon, Professor Andrews shows are worthy of attention as reflecting the English attitude toward colonial laws. Rhode Island sent to England not a collection of her laws in 1699 (p. 103, note 1), but only an "Imperfect Abstract thereof".

There are also serious faults in the usage and definition of terms, some of which occur in sufficient regularity to point to carelessness. It is curious to find "King's Counsel" used over and again as if it applied only to the "standing counsel of the Board of Trade". In fact Francis Fane, who occupied this position for at least a score of years, was not a K. C. Frequently "solicitor and attorney" or "solicitor and attorney-general" are repeatedly and incorrectly employed for "solicitor-general and attorney-general". There was an "auditor-general of plantation revenues" but no "auditor-general of the plantations" (p. 72).

In the interest of exact definition of terms in a new field of historical investigation, it is well at the outset to make several corrections. The disallowance was an exercise of executive power rather than an act of legislation as implied in the phrase "legislative review". A "report" and a "representation" of the Board of Trade were not considered interchangeable (p. 52 and note 2), nor did the distinction rest upon the question of formality or of the recipient. The former was a reply of the Board of Trade to a request from the Privy Council, its committees, or either House of Parliament, and the latter was a statement initiated by the Board itself. It is interesting to find a student of Professor Osgood following the antiquated and illogical classification of the colonies as "royal, charter, and proprietary" (p. 93).

These faults are not enumerated to convey the impression that Dr. Russell's work is mediocre. That would be unjust. It is welcomed as

a valuable contribution in its field, standing somewhat above the average doctor's dissertation, thorough, and well written.

W. T. Root.

*Writings of John Quincy Adams.* Edited by WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD. Volume V., 1814-1816. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1915. Pp. xxvii, 556.)

WHEN John Quincy Adams left St. Petersburg to join the other peace commissioners at Gothenburg, he was in an unusually sanguine frame of mind. "The coalition of Europe against France has at length been crowned with complete success", he wrote to Abigail Adams. "I can not but indulge the hope that it opens a prospect of at least more tranquility and security to the civilized part of mankind than they have enjoyed the last half century." Peace in Europe, he thought, would leave the war between England and the United States without any object but an abstract principle. Neither would be disposed to continue the war on such a point. At the same time he anticipated no settlement of the real issue. Peace would remove any occasion for England to continue the practice of impressment, but no concession of principle was to be expected. "The only way of coming to terms of peace with England, therefore, at this time . . . is to leave the question just where it was, saying nothing about it, but I know such a peace would not satisfy the people of America, and I have no desire to be instrumental in concluding it." Events proved Adams a shrewd prophet, but Fate decreed that he should play a conspicuous part in concluding just such a treaty of peace.

On the way to Gothenburg, Adams learned to his chagrin that the scene of negotiations had been shifted to the city of Ghent. From this moment his optimism evaporated. When he arrived at Ghent in June he was of the opinion that nearly two good months had been wasted. Moreover, he was now convinced that the British ministry was not disposed to make peace. He anticipated a speedy return to his family in St. Petersburg. In this expectation he was grievously disappointed. The negotiations which finally began on August 8 dragged on through weary months until the close of the year.

It cannot be said that this volume discloses much new material on the negotiations at Ghent. The entries in the *Memoirs*, which are almost equivalent to a journal of the proceedings of the commissioners, are too closely knit to permit much new light to enter; and many of the side-lights which Adams's letters shed have been reflected in the pages of Mr. Henry Adams's *History*. Nevertheless it is a great satisfaction to have the intimate letters of Adams made accessible. His letters to Mrs. Adams during their long separation are full of entertaining comments on the daily life of the writer and his colleagues. After reading these letters one is disposed to question the common impression for which, perhaps, Mr. Henry Adams is responsible, that the five American com-